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WILLIAM BENEDICT RUSSELL III

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Letter from the Editor

Dear Conference Presenters,

Thank you for your wonderful contributions to the 2016 International Society for the Social Studies Annual Conference. Your presentations have helped to make the conference a success. The combination of pedagogical and content based presentations left conference attendees both excited and content. It is our hope that the following will either provide a synopsis of the presentations or offer even more information.

Sincerely,

William B. Russell III
Editor

Bonnie L. Bittman
Editorial Assistant

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The Emergence of Social Studies in Trinidad and Tobago

Leela Ramsook
University of Trinidad and Tobago

The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago is a twin island state situated at the most southerly end of the chain of Caribbean islands. The country which was a former British colony gained independence in 1962 and subsequently became the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago in 1976. The school subjects that were offered at schools were prescribed by the colonial government (Campbell, 1992) and much of the content reflected British ideologies. Bacchus (1996) notes that schools were a replica of British institutions. The typical subjects offered at the secondary school level on the eve of independence in Trinidad and Tobago included English Language, Mathematics, English Literature, History, Geography, Chemistry, Physics, Biology, French, Spanish and Religious Knowledge (London, 2002). When the then colony acceded to political independence, Social Studies was not in existence as an examinable subject (Seepersad & Beddoe, 1985).

The purpose of the study was to unearth how participants experienced and interpreted the emergence of Social Studies in Trinidad and Tobago. It investigated how the subject found a place on the time-table of schools nationally, the micro-politics involved and the circumstances, tensions and contradictions that prevailed

The research questions in this study included the following:

1. What were the micro-politics involved in the emergence of Social Studies?

2. What were participants' experiences and interpretations in the process?

3. What tensions and contradictions surrounded the genesis of the area?

From the review of literature, it was observed that there are many controversial reports of the early beginning of Social Studies in different parts of the world particularly in postcolonial societies. The subject has been retained on the national curriculum in countries such as the United States of America (Mraz, 2004), Uganda and Singapore. Other nations like Hong Kong sought to promote nationalism, while post-colonial societies

such as Botswana aimed at promoting patriotism and nation building. But there is a dearth of information about participants' experiences and interpretations on the emergence of the subject.

A qualitative approach using a hermeneutic phenomenological methodology (Moustakas, 1994) was utilized in the study. Snowball sampling, a kind of purposive sampling (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007) was used in the research as only certain persons were involved in the evolution of Social Studies from inception. Based on their involvement in the process, five participants were selected. Data collection procedures included in-depth interviews, semi-structured interviews, journaling and questionnaires, which facilitated triangulation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

All data were transcribed into verbatim accounts and verified by participants for credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1998) and accuracy (Meriam, 1998; Lichtman, 2006). Confidentiality of data (Creswell, 2012) and anonymity of each interviewee's identity (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) were maintained. Using a hermeneutic phenomenological approach (Husserl, 1970; Heidegger, 1962; Gadamer, 1976) participants' experiences and interpretations were unearthed. Data were analyzed using a method

proposed by Ajjawi and Higgs (2007) which is comparable to that of Creswell (2012). A detailed rigorous analysis was conducted (Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2014) from which themes evolved and a robust description was created.

Firstly, the data revealed that a certain powerful individual exerted influence so that Social Studies became a reality, for example, "A Powerful Proactive Visionary" emerged as a theme. Secondly, it was discerned that historical, political and social factors were responsible for creating Social Studies as a viable subject nationally. Thirdly, disputes and tensions erupted among various stakeholders including teachers.

The research outlined how Social Studies became a subject on the national curriculum in Trinidad and Tobago. Data were collected from participants who were involved in the initial phase when the subject was conceptualized. A hermeneutic phenomenological approach was adopted to excavate the experiences of participants, the micro politics that operated as well as the contradictions that prevailed during the early period in the development of the subject.

The following topics may be explored as future research: the status of Social Studies in Trinidad and Tobago currently; how Social Studies teachers are perceived in comparison to their counterparts in the hard sciences; and the extent to which Social Studies promotes citizenship education.

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Opinions of Parents of Students Who Studied in Secondary School Regarding Concept of 'Good Citizen' and 'Good Citizen' Education in Families and in School (5th-8th Grades)

Ilker Dere
Usak University

Nurgul Kizilay
Abant Izzet Baysal University

Raising a 'good citizen' is one of the most important purposes of states. Hence, schools are the most important institutions in 'good citizen' education. Since 'good citizen' education covers in-class and out-class activities, teachers have a crucial role in the success of education process. 'Good citizen' education starts in families, so parents are also responsible for raising 'good citizen'.

Previous studies focused on opinions of teachers and students rather than parents. This paper thereby aims to contribute parents' opinion to the field. In this paper, the phenomenological research design was utilized to determine parent's opinions about the concept of 'good citizen' and 'good citizen' education in families and school (Creswell, 2015). Also, data was collected by semi-structured interview form which allow to

participations to explain their opinions and feelings in detail (Merriam, 2013). The working group consisted of the 8 parents of students who are studying in a state school in Kahta, District, Adiyaman, and Turkey.

This study has shown that parents want to raise their children as a good citizen for both country and community. They also have emphasized that a 'good citizen' has good behaviors such as serving in the army, paying taxes, helping others, supporting oneself family, and improving oneself. These findings are similar to some other studies (Ersoy, 2012; Alazzi, 2009). Furthermore, teachers have more responsibilities than families educating of a 'good citizen' progress. In conclusion, parents want to raise their children as a 'good citizen' and they also expect that schools to be more active in raising good citizens for their society.

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Where Are We Now: A Critical Analysis of Historical and Present-Day Race Riots

Gregory L. Samuels
University of Montevallo

Introduction

This essay highlights the need and methods to discuss historical and modern race riots throughout the United States in the social studies classroom. Social studies educators, while following guidelines of best practices, will fulfill the democratic characteristics of a true education by providing a critical analysis of historical and present-day race riots. Furthermore, this essay will explore methods of facilitating student learning and analysis of the Tulsa Race Riots (1921), Zoot Suit Riots (1943), Crown Heights Riots in NY (1991), Ferguson Riots in Missouri (2014), and the Baltimore Riots in Maryland (2015).

Facilitating Critical Conversations

Historical and present-day race riots such as The Tulsa Race Riots (1921), Zoot Suit Riots (1943), riots in Crown Heights (1991), riots in Ferguson (2014), and the Baltimore Riots (2015) will range in familiarity to students in today's social studies classroom, yet all are equally as

relevant. For example, while teaching a lesson on The Roaring Twenties, a new or veteran educator may design discussions and structure an assignment around the culture of flappers and mobsters, legislation surrounding prohibition and the Palmer Raids, or an increase in credit and consumerism throughout the early part of the decade. Further in the unit, the educator may approach the 1940s era with propaganda posters highlighting initiatives and views throughout World War II and prompt students to discuss Germany's militaristic strategies implemented throughout Europe.

Throughout these lessons, it is important for all educators to realize "who is in the classroom" and immediately give them a connection to what is being taught. It is certainly not within the realm of best practices to approach content as one dimensional and without agency to learners engaging with it. Viewing students as "actors who have a sense of their own agency as well as a sense of social responsibility toward and with others, their society, and the broader world in which we live" (Dixson & Smith, 2010, pp. 1-2) allows social studies educators to enhance those

aforementioned lessons with events beyond the pages of what the average textbook provides for social studies classrooms today.

Most discussions concerning controversial topics such as race riots need guidelines in order to avoid offensive language, rude comments, and to basically promote a safe learning environment for all members of the classroom. Using resources such as *Courageous Conversations About Race: A Field Guide for Achieving Equity In Schools* by G. Singleton and C. Liston (2006) or Kawashima-Ginsberg and Levine's article titled, *Challenges and Opportunities for Discussion of Controversial Issues in Racially Pluralistic Schools* (2015) can serve as a strong foundation for creating a culturally-responsive classroom and preparing students to engage in lessons aligned with controversial issues. Providing guidelines for these discussions may be few, but effective for moving forward to wholesome discussions on race riots as they emerge throughout the curriculum.

1. Stay Engaged

2. Speak Our Truth

3. Experience Discomfort

4. Expect and Accept Non-Closure

5. Listen for Understanding

G. Singleton and C. Liston (2006)

Graphic Organizers for In-Depth Understanding

In order to close the margins of familiarity and strengthen student's knowledge of race riots, providing graphic organizers allows students to identify and analyze commonalities, differences, catalysts, outcomes, progress and/or consequences of the events. Remember the novice or veteran teacher we spoke of earlier? Well, they are still on the unit showcasing World War II and would like to design a more in-depth approach to the Zoot Suit Riots (1943) as well as the Sleepy Lagoon Murders (1942). Most textbooks only provide a one-page feature or a sidebar in the corner of the page. However, teaching and learning beyond the margins of the textbook prompts quality educators to include these two events to add context to societal tensions on the home front during World War II.

Considering these factors, in-depth understanding is improved with the design of a simple graphic organizer to be completed while students

read primary sources on each race riot, listen to clips from actual participants, or watch online footage from the scene. Graphic organizers come in many forms, but the varying degrees of simplicity may increase the odds of students successfully capturing and dissecting each race riot. These are examples of items to include for a critical approach to completing a graphic organizer: *the race riot name, location, and date of occurrence*; *short and long-term effects of the race riot*; *public opinions, both just and unjust*; *enrichment facts from each race riot.*

Technology-Based Exploration

As the year progresses, the novice or veteran social studies educator approaches the modern era of U.S. History (i.e. 21st Century Issues) with excitement based on the increased familiarity of content and connection with their students. This portion of the curriculum would be enhanced by including modern race riots such as the riots in Crown Heights (1991), Ferguson (2014), and Baltimore (2015), as these events have attracted national interest and will serve to reflect real-world experiences.

Practical and effective methods that promote inquiry or problem-based learning and include the use of technology such as primary resources, video clips, and music complement various learning styles as students explore new content. Bernie Dodge (2001) highlights critical components of designing online, inquiry-based resources in *F.O.C.U.S. Five Rules for Writing a Great Webquest* which go beyond a simplistic and ineffective online scavenger hunt. With the availability of today's free software, most schools and classrooms have access to Google Site. By embedding a Webquest in a Google Site, with the aforementioned components, a social studies educator can allow students to work in groups and collaborate in the unveiling of historical and modern race riots, not always present in textbooks, but easily accessed online.

See sample lesson: https://sites.google.com/a/mail.usf.edu/where-are-we-now-a-critical-analysis-of-historical-and-present-day-race-riots/

The Google Site includes the Webquest, as well as supplementary materials necessary to successfully facilitate the lesson.

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Opinions of Students about the Use of Oral History as a Teaching and Learning Method in Social Studies Courses

Erkan Dinc
Usak University

Ilker Dere
Usak University

Emin Kilinc
Dumlupınar University

Oral history is the personal recording of testimonies delivered in oral form (Row, 2005). Even though it is one of the data collection tools of history, and used in all fields from sociology to political sciences, and from cultural studies to educational studies (Perk and Thompson, 1998; Ritchie, 2011). Especially, it is increasingly preferred in educational studies. The most important oral project among other educational studies is Foxfire Project, whose results were published in a national wide book series in the USA (Vann and Fairbairn, 2003).

In the 2005 Social Studies Education Teaching Program, an alternative teaching and learning method, technique and implementations have been proposed in social studies courses. In the proposed program oral

history method was included as one of the methods (MEB, 2006). But detailed knowledge about how to use oral history studies was not included.

The aim of this study is to reflect opinions of students about the use of oral history as a teaching and learning method in social studies courses. In the paper, the exploratory research design was given preference over qualitative research design (Singh, 2007. Was used to collect data as scales developed by researchers focus group interview forms. A working group has been formed of 6th-grade students of a secondary school serving the province of the central district in Usak. In the study, a purposive sampling method was used.

The results showed that oral history can effectively be used as a teaching and learning method in social studies. In teaching oral history, teachers should constantly guide their students as they might be in need of assistance in all stages of their project. It was found out that students did not like note-taking and transcribing tasks. They mostly liked the role of being an interviewer. Teachers who use oral history might keep the balance between student's tasks. Since some students took more responsibilities in some groups, they felt disappointed during in the oral

history project. Also, in order to obtain their consent and permission teachers should inform the parents about the project, its procedures, and requirements.

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Interdisciplinary Approaches to Global Education: Strategies for Internationalizing the Curriculum

Madelyn Flammia
University of Central Florida

Houman Sadri
University of Central Florida

Cynthia Mejia
University of Central Florida

Introduction

Educators must find ways to prepare students for the challenges they will face in both their professional and their personal lives as citizens in the 21st century. The integration of global studies into the core curriculum is "vitally important for the well-being of individual students, communities, and the world more broadly" (Coker, Haskell, & Nelson, 2014). Faculty must create assignments and courses that facilitate the development of students' global competency.

Global competency is a set of skills, abilities, and knowledge. Globally competent individuals know how to communicate effectively with diverse others and to use communication technologies to collaborate

across national borders (Starke-Meyerring, Duin, & Palvetzian, 2007). They possess both cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity. Individuals who are globally competent see connections between the global and the local and take a world view of events (Stevens & Campbell, 2006). Such individuals also have the ability to think critically about global issues and view them from an interdisciplinary perspective (Flammia, 2012). Finally, citizens who possess global competency are often inspired to take action to address global concerns at a local level.

Instruction that incorporates interdisciplinary and intercultural perspectives can help students develop global competency and can enhance their civic engagement both locally and globally (Soria & Troisi, 2014). Often university faculty need support to help them develop strategies for internationalizing courses and for incorporating interdisciplinary perspectives into their assignments.

An Internationalization Project

This paper discusses an internationalization project that involved the creation of a series of assignments designed to be taught in many diverse disciplines; the assignments incorporated instruction in writing,

intercultural communication, and effective use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) and collaborative technologies. The assignments were designed so that they could be used either individually or in a sequence.

The assignments were all drawn from a Global Citizenship course taught by two of the authors. In adapting the assignments for the internationalization project, the authors strove to make them more generic so that they could be more easily adapted across disciplines. Each assignment includes a set of objectives for student learning related to the skills and knowledge associated with global competency and examples of how the assignment might be adapted in other disciplines.

Description of Assignments

There were five assignments included in the internationalization project:

- Internet Research Assignment (IRA)

- Country Research Report

- Interview with Subject Matter Expert in Another Culture

- Group or Individual Documentation Project

- Presentation

Currently the assignments are being pilot tested by a core group of faculty at the University of Central Florida (UCF) in disciplines that include hospitality management, engineering, history, creative writing, and communication. For example, in Fall 2015 in a Supply and Procurement Management course 31 undergraduate hospitality students were given the interview assignment; they were required to conduct a 10-15 minute interview with a foreign-born purchasing manager from any segment of the service industries. Students were given a set of recommended questions for the interview and were required to submit an executive summary which included a personal reflection on the assignment. The results of the assignment pilot test were of value to both the students and the instructor, as the students' personal reflections will inform the design and scope of similar future assignments.

The authors plan to assess the usefulness of the assignments based on the results of the pilot tests. The assessment will include both quantitative data on student learning outcomes and qualitative data on students' perceptions of the learning experience. The assessment will also include a quantitative and qualitative evaluation of the effectiveness of the

assignments by the faculty members who pilot test them. After the initial pilot tests, the authors will make the revised assignments available to colleagues at UCF and will continue to gather assessment data from those faculty members who use the assignments in their courses.

Conclusion

The goal of this project is to help faculty members create assignments and courses that will develop students' global competency and, thereby, enhance their civic engagement. The assignments described in this paper will be of particular value to faculty members new to the challenges associated with internationalizing courses and with interdisciplinary teaching. The assignments can be used in a sequence as the basis for an entire course in global citizenship or intercultural communication or they can be used individually and adapted across the disciplines as they have been by the authors' colleagues at the University of Central Florida. In the future, the authors hope to make these assignments available to faculty members outside the UCF community.

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The United States Pledge of Allegiance Ceremony: Reactions from Middle School Students

Leisa A. Martin
University of Texas at Arlington

The main goal of social studies is to prepare students for citizenship in our society, and one ritual that was specifically designed to socialize students for citizenship is the United States Pledge of Allegiance ceremony (Ellis, 2005; Herczog, 2013; National Council for the Social Studies, 2010). In previous research (Author, 2011; Author, 2014), when primarily European American and African American middle school students were asked what the Pledge meant to them personally, they discussed America and their feelings of loyalty to America. Yet, for 7% of the sixth grade participants and 2% of the eight grade participants, the Pledge meant nothing to them. During the follow up interviews, they requested additional instruction on the Pledge so that they could better understand this daily school ritual. While Author (2011) and Author (2014) focused on primarily on European American and African American middle school students, this study evaluated European Americans, Native

American Mohawks, and students who classified themselves as other. The study examined the following research question. What are middle school students' reactions to the United States Pledge of Allegiance ceremony?

The study evaluated 60 middle school students, and the participants included 29 males and 31 females from a rural middle school in the northeastern United States. In terms of their racial/ethnic background, 26 students were Native American, 22 students were European American, and 12 students classified themselves as other. The Native American participants are members of the Akwesasne branch of the Mohawk tribe, and the Mohawks are part of the Iroquois nation. The participants were social studies students from the 7th and 8th grades, and the study took place during their social studies classes. The Pledge survey evaluated them on their willingness to recite the Pledge during the Pledge ceremony, their reasons for participating or not participating in the Pledge ceremony, and their understanding of ideas within the Pledge.

Overall, when the participants were asked if they recite the Pledge during the United States Pledge of Allegiance ceremony, 60% of the middle school students wrote no. However, there was a stark difference

among the participants with 89% of the Mohawk students writing no, and 59% of the European American students writing yes. The students who classified themselves as other were equally divided with 50% of them writing yes and 50% of them writing no.

When they were asked why they do not participate in this daily school ritual, for all of the racial/ethnic groups, the most common response was no reason (56%). This response was provided by 57% of the Mohawks, 43% of the European Americans, and 67% of the students who classified themselves as other. Among the Mohawk students, their second most common response was to discuss their status as a Mohawk or Native American (22%).

When the participants were asked to explain the most important ideas within the Pledge, the most common response (45%) involved patriotism/loyalty/unity. Among the Mohawk students, while 35% discussed patriotism/loyalty/unity, 35% of them wrote I don't know. In contrast, 50% of the European American students discussed patriotism/loyalty/unity, and 41% of them discussed ideals such as liberty, justice, equality, and freedom. Among the students who classified

themselves as other, 58% of them discussed patriotism/loyalty/unity, and 25% of them wrote about ideals such as liberty, justice, equality, and freedom.

Although the Pledge is a daily school ritual, overall, 60% of the participants stated that they do not recite the Pledge during the Pledge ceremony. When asked why they chose not to participate in this daily school ritual, the most common reaction was not to disclose a reason. In addition, 35% of the Mohawk students were unable to state the most important ideas within the Pledge. This level of confusion is much higher than previous studies (Author, 2011; Author, 2014). By providing instruction on the history of the Pledge, discussing the meaning of the words within the Pledge, and by discussing how the Pledge ceremony is one of many different ways that students can demonstrate citizenship, students can make a more informed decision about this daily school ritual.

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Video Games in the Social Studies: Teaching and Assessment Strategies

Joshua M. Patterson
University of South Florida

Alex Ledford
University of South Florida

As an individual born during the period of flux between digital immigration and nativity (Prensky, 2001), I enjoy a unique perspective while navigating my endless expedition towards instructional mastery. A generation straddling technological modernity, some social studies educators like myself, has been exposed to the annals of history through a socializing medium beyond books, television, and film. We now exist in a culture of simulation, where the same complex ideas that shape classroom content are examined, characterized, and communicated through interactive virtual media. Whether I was cognizant of my paradigm shift or not, there was a demarcating point in my life when I chose to access curricula through video games. The closer we move to the present, the more students elect to explore historical subject matter by way of digital simulations; yet the educational research community still possesses a

rudimentary understanding of how learning through such interactive systems can enhance players' higher-order thinking about the past.

After reflecting upon this striking disconnect, I felt compelled to address the vast chasm separating current classroom strategies and the technological saturation of adolescents. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (2014), better known as "The Nation's Report Card," only 18% of eighth graders perform at or above the proficient level in U.S. history. This abysmal score represents no significant change from the previous exam (2010), which begs the following question: how much have teachers adapted to the multimedia-soaked, virtually-connected society that American students presently exist in? What are some instructional tactics that educators can utilize to capitalize on modernity's demand for instant gratification? Simply put, how can social studies educators breathe new life into mundane content and reverse this frightening trend of academic stagnation?

Charged with the task of attuning the antiquated classroom to the adolescent learner's social diet, I turned to the solace I sunk an embarrassingly-large fraction of my life into, alluded to above: video

games. This amorphous term can best be understood as any virtual, interactive experience communicated by way of a console, computer, smartphone, tablet, or smart TV. The Entertainment Software Association (2015) reported that four out of five U.S. households own a device used to play video games, amounting to 155 million individuals actively gaming nationwide. This translates to roughly 42% of Americans playing video games regularly, understood as three hours or more per week, with a mean of two gamers in each game-playing household.

Since these statistics are based on national averages rife with inequality, they do not accurately represent the integral position video games play in the American student's daily routine. However, Kahne, Middaugh, Macgill, Evans, & Vitak (2008) surveyed a diverse cross-section of U.S. teenagers and discovered that ninety-seven percent reported being regular consumers of video games, with nearly fifty percent responding affirmatively to playing a video games in the past 24 hours. Why not harness this enthusiasm for digital entertainment by connecting it to pivotal classroom content that corresponds with the themes evoked by

the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) and the C3 Framework?

Barbara Chamberlin, project director at the New Mexico State University Learning Games Lab, asserts that "games offer immediate feedback, you can see your progress, you can try something and be frustrated but later learn more… that's why gameplay is so engaging to us" (Entertainment Software Association, 2015). This dynamism is precisely what the NCSS envisioned in their Technology Position Statement (2013b) when they commissioned social studies instructors to better translate informal, socially-oriented encounters (i.e. video games) into a more academic, civically-oriented curriculum. By incorporating virtual, interactive media in the classroom, otherwise known as the gamification of education, teachers create an interdisciplinary nexus between social studies content and the socialization of adolescents.

Infusing games into education offers instructors the benefit of connecting to students through immersive, digital environments capable of resuscitating a multitude of mundane social studies subjects. The exhaustive detail involved in developing both storyline and setting makes

video games an ideal secondary source to be used in conjunction with primary sources, a key component of the Inquiry Arc of the C3 Framework (2013a). Game developers often spend years investigating their topic, sending artists around the globe to accurately portray destinations, historical and contemporary, committed to ensuring places appear as lifelike as possible.

Through the application of gaming in the classroom, instructors can implement ideals and feelings that come naturally in digital environments, such as a sense of agency that inspires players to take control of their character's future (Maguth, List, & Wunderle, 2015). By becoming heroes with the power to transform virtual worlds, students are motivated to learn the course content as this would be necessary to make informed decisions (Gee, 2004). They will discover consequences and will more deeply understand that failure means an opportunity to start over and improve their performance (Gee, 2005).

As students continue to come in contact with social studies themes courtesy of digital entertainment more readily, teachers must take the necessary steps to promote, motivate and support gameplay and learning

in the classroom (Abdul Jabbar & Felicia, 2015). Educators must be conscious of their pupils' explicit needs and abilities, ensuring that a collaborative simulation such as *Assassin's Creed 3* (Fig. 10) contains the necessary interactive materials and support structures (Wright-Maley, 2015). To stick with this example, set during the American Revolution, fans of the open world console game have created *wikis* - websites that permit collaborative content editing - containing image galleries, articles, forums, and a chat server in which players can interact with one another.

As Clark, Tanner-Smith, Killingsworth, & Bellamy (2013) advise, gaming activities should correlate with students' gender, game type preferences, preferred mode of gameplay, and the game's learning tasks in order to provide a sense of enjoyment and motivation that rewards all parties. Moving forward, researchers and practitioners should develop commercial, off-the-shelf (COTS) video game-based lesson plans in conjunction with adolescents in an effort to propose elements more suitable to enriching engagement and authentic learning opportunities (Abdul Jabbar & Felicia, 2015).

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Teachers' Perspectives on Culturally Responsive Teaching

Amy J. Samuels
University of Montevallo

Introduction

Culturally Responsive Teaching refers to a student-centered approach that promotes equitable excellence and serves to validate and affirm the experiences and contributions of students from all cultures and backgrounds. The framework gained attention through the work of Gloria Ladson-Billings in the 1990s and has grown extensively over the last two decades. It is connected to the larger field of multi-cultural education, but serves to highlight not just inclusiveness of curriculum, but how to negotiate change and promote advocacy in the current social and political context (Villegas & Lucas, 2007). The framework is designed to encourage inclusiveness and responsiveness in the thoughts and actions of both teachers and students, as well as in framing and implementing learning activities and educational experiences.

The purpose of this article is to present a qualitative study which explored perceptions of Culturally Responsive Teaching of inservice

teachers serving in low socio-economic schools in a large urban school district in the southeast region of the United States. The research involved collecting data from approximately 200 teachers over a four-month period. Participants engaged in focus groups of four to five to explore characteristics of Culturally Responsive Teaching as highlighted by Villegas and Lucas (2007): (1) understanding how learners construct knowledge, (2) learning about students' lives, (3) being socio-culturally conscious, (4) holding affirming views about diversity, (5) using diverse instructional strategies, and (6) advocating for all students.

The purpose of the research was two-fold. While the primary goal was to contribute to and inspire dialogue related to perspectives of Culturally Responsive Teaching of currently practicing teachers, the secondary aim was to purposefully create spaces for education professionals to engage in discussion regarding how to best foster this framework in the K-12 context. First, teachers were given time to reflect on characteristics of Culturally Responsive Teaching and engage in dialogue about how the highlighted characteristics could be interpreted in a practical setting. Second, participants were asked to consider how the

characteristics could be best applied or facilitated in their current contexts. Third, teachers were given the opportunity to explore perceived advantages, as well as perceived challenges, of employing this framework. Data was analyzed for prominent themes which are reported below.

Findings

The findings revealed commonalties regarding perceived advantages and potential challenges, as well as how Culturally Responsive Teaching can be facilitated in the K-12 classroom. In relation to perceived advantages, participants considered facilitation of Culturally Responsive Teaching beneficial in relationship building, fostering cross-cultural understanding and inclusiveness, and influencing more diverse world views. Participants spoke extensively about how cultural responsiveness has the potential to positively influence classroom culture and establish a relationship of trust while encouraging students to feel connected, included, and valued. This sense of value can lead to a sense of empowerment on behalf of students, helping them better understand and positively view both themselves and others. Extending beyond soft skills and social emotional skills, participants highlighted the potential for

students to develop an increased open-mindedness and expanded worldviews through participation in open dialogue and engagement in constructivist and/or collaborative learning. Dialogue associated with socio-cultural consciousness and diversity awareness not only exposes students to systemic inequalities and allows them to develop an increased awareness of the world, facilitation of culturally responsive practices provides teachers the opportunity to become more knowledgeable of the students they serve and the world around them.

Along with advantages, participants also expressed concerns over implementation of Culturally Responsive Teaching by highlighting potential difficulties. Participants spoke at length about the challenges that come when trying to navigate potentially controversial topics in the classroom, especially when the teacher may have limited background knowledge in relation to the particular topic. Participants also spoke of the reality of bias, both personal and institutional, and how such biases could result in a decreased sense of commitment to be culturally responsive. In relation to demands and restraints, teachers noted how it could be overwhelming trying to accommodate inclusivity for all populations,

especially when time is restrained by curricular demands or they have access to limited resources or pedagogical strategies.

In addition to perceived advantages and challenges, participants reflected on strategies for best employing Culturally Responsive Teaching**.** Similar to Ladson-Billings' article title (1995), teachers expressed that many strategies that embrace culturally responsive practice are characteristics of "good teaching." Participants spoke most extensively about the need for dialogue and rich, meaningful conversation to encourage questions about difference and provide students the opportunity to discuss real-world experiences, cultural influences, current events related to social justice, and the influence of race, gender, and socio-economic status in historical and current-day inequities. Teachers also highlighted the importance of embracing differentiated instruction, student choice, and use of surveys (both student and parent) to learn more about students' interests, skills, and backgrounds. In addition, they also highlighted the need to tailor learning to students' interests by incorporating various cultures into the curriculum and through designing

lessons that are inclusive in relation to texts, resources, supplementary materials, and learning activities.

Implications

Data from the focus groups and analysis of transcripts provided the opportunity to examine Culturally Responsive Teaching from the perspective of inservice teachers who express an interest in this paradigm and work with diverse groups of students. Findings suggested that Culturally Responsive Teaching extends beyond theory and teachers perceive Culturally Responsive Teaching as an advantageous framework that can be fostered in the classroom and incorporated into daily practice. Considering the challenges highlighted by participants, inservice teachers would benefit from the opportunity to engage in professional development and learning opportunities that would allow them to (1) explore their beliefs and values related to diversity, (2) discuss controversial topics to increase their comfort level when facilitating such conversations, and (3) learn inclusive pedagogical strategies and consider how to best incorporate them into their professional context.

The research serves to contribute to the meaningful conversation of how to present a more inclusive and responsive educational environment that gives voice to all students and promotes equitable access and opportunities.

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Facilitating Discussion of Challenging Topics in the Classroom

Amy J. Samuels
University of Montevallo

Gregory L. Samuels
University of Montevallo

Introduction

The purpose of this essay is to examine the practice of facilitating discussion of challenging topics in the classroom and problematize its decline. Using a brief review of literature as an illustrative example, we explore the following questions: 1) In what ways does facilitating discussion of challenging topics in the classroom positively impact student learning? 2) How can teachers best facilitate such discussions?

Facilitating Discussion in the Social Studies Classroom

While traditional lecture is currently the most common practice used to deliver instruction in social studies classrooms (Burenheide, 2007), it is important to explore alternative approaches that serve to promote student voice and engagement. Application of best practices, such as engaging in thoughtful, evidence-based discussions, analyzing primary

sources, and leading their own thinking in inquiry-based learning, provides students the opportunity to think critically and deeply about the content (Stone, 2008). Even though classroom discussion related to potentially controversial issues is beneficial for student engagement, such discussion is declining in the social studies classroom (Kawashima-Ginsberg & Levine, 2015). In their research on racially pluralistic high schools, Kawashima-Ginsberg and Levine (2015) found that participating in discussions of challenging topics serves to inspire future civic engagement; however, discourse on controversial topics is marginally represented in the classroom setting. Such discussions create risks as students may not know what is perceived as acceptable by their peers. Therefore, instead of taking a risk and feeling alienated, it may be considered more comfortable and safer to avoid participation altogether. Therefore, when using discussion as a pedagogical strategy, it is critical for teachers to scaffold the content and promote a positive climate and culture in the classroom.

In addition, teachers often fear criticism, as well, since such discussions may result in potentially negative consequences from school

leaders or parents. As a result, teachers may strategically decide to avoid potentially polarizing topics by eliminating these topics from the classroom. Educators also express discomfort engaging in such discussions which make it so dialogue centered on race, personal difference, and equity are often avoided in educational preparation, professional development, and schools (Boske, 2010; Hernandez & Marshall, 2009; Ladson-Billings, 2006). Along with discomfort, the age of accountability and the heavy focus on standardized tests have resulted in further decline of discussion-based strategies because teachers are challenged by shifting priorities and time constraints (Kawashima-Ginsberg & Levine, 2015).

Despite the challenges, facilitating discussion of controversial conversations serves to promote educational equity by affording students the opportunity to reflect, think critically, and engage in rigorous learning. In addition, providing a lens for understanding and reflecting on current events and controversies highlights experienced realities and promotes cultural responsiveness by honoring multiple perspectives and attending to important dimensions of authentic learning (Villegas & Lucas, 2007).

Strategies for Promoting Discussion

By selecting topics of interest, scaffolding learning, and inviting multiple perspectives, regularly facilitating organized and structured lessons involving discussion of controversial issues will serve to promote student engagement and inquiry. In addition, when the topics promote diversity and are related to race, class, and culture the discussions employ a social justice approach as they advocate discourse on topics that are often marginalized or silenced (Stone, 2008).

In the last few years, violence against African American males has been brought under national scrutiny and is considered a current crisis by many. While teachers may hesitate to engage students in discussions on race (Mazzei, 2008), this is a high-interest topic for many students. In order to promote learning on this topic, students could be asked to consider the following essential question: Is Violence against African American Males a Human Rights Violation? The following WebQuest (https://sites.google.com/a/mail.usf.edu/ncss-2015/) can be used as an instructional tool to facilitate inquiry-based learning. The lesson plan is multi-segmented and provides: 1) whole-class exploration of the

Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 2) a WebQuest designed for students to examine highlighted cases and collect evidence and, 3) protocols for a structured class discussion centered on the critical question: Is violence against African American males a human rights violation? Strategies are designed to appeal to diverse learners and can be facilitated to encourage students to act as critical agents and investigate potential human rights violations while incorporating primary source analysis, cultural literacy, critical thinking and examination, and student voice.

In addition to WebQuest, there are other technology sources that can be used to promote engagement and ask probing questions used to further facilitate discussion. For example, Nearpod (https://nearpod.com) provides students the opportunity to interact with technology and serves to alleviate fear based on the anonymity in responses. Kahoot (https://getkahoot.com) and Socrative (http://www.socrative.com/) are also valuable teaching tools that can be used to assess students' feelings (or understanding) of a topic through real-time questioning in polls, surveys, and short response questions. Like Nearpod, both Kahoot and Socrative offer anonymity in responses.

Conclusion

Regardless of the tool, it is important for teachers to consider whether they are providing students authentic learning opportunities to reflect on multiple perspectives, experienced reality, and diversity. While facilitating potentially controversial topics may result in some discomfort (for both the teacher and students), by fostering a classroom climate and culture conducive to risk-taking and through the use of scaffolding rigorous content and thought processes, discussions can be facilitated to promote active listening, reflection, evidence-based responses, and critical conversations; thereby promoting engagement and positively impacting student learning.

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"Minecraft Made Me Sick:" The Use of Minecraft with Pre-Service Elementary Education Students

Michael Scarlett
Augustana College

Research and theory suggest that video games can be an effective tool for teaching and learning (Gaudelli & Taylor, 2011; Gee, 2007; Gee, 2011; Maguth, List, & Wunderle, 2015; Squire, 2008; and others) however little research exists on the attitudes of pre-service teachers towards using video games to teach and the best practices for introducing video games in pre-service education. In addition, there has been a great deal of attention in the media to the use of Minecraft to teach and some research yet very little is known about how pre-service teachers perceive the use of this game as an instructional tool.

This small-scale study aimed to better understand how pre-service teachers perceive video games as an instructional tool, specifically Minecraft. By having pre-service elementary education students play and design lessons using Minecraft, the researcher surveyed participants' attitudes and analyzed what participants learned during the use of the

game and in their lessons. The research questions included: How do pre-service elementary teachers perceive the use of Minecraft to teach social studies? What factors shape pre-service teachers' perceptions of Minecraft?

The participants in this study were all undergraduate pre-service elementary education students at a selective, liberal arts college in the Midwest. Of the thirteen students participating, all were female and all were in their junior year. The study was conducted in a social studies methods course for elementary teachers. During a two-week unit on teaching geography the students were introduced to Minecraft, a sandbox-style video game in which players are placed in a virtual world, and, depending on the game settings, are allowed to simply create whatever they want using the resources available to them in the world, or, they must gather resources needed to survive against various "mobs" or creatures trying to kill them. The version of the game used in this study, called MinecraftEdu, was designed specifically for classroom use.

The students spent one week engaged with the game. They first participated in a tutorial and then they were put in small groups and placed

in a new world and given a series of tasks designed to encourage them to collaboratively think of ways to teach geography. Their final assignment was to design a lesson or short unit of study to teach students in grades 4-6 about geographic concepts. To prepare the students to participate they read a chapter from a methods textbook on best practices for teaching about geography (Lee, 2007), they were introduced to principles of game-based learning (Gee, 2007), and they examined several examples of how teachers are using Minecraft to teach.

Prior to the course the students took a pre-survey designed to measure their experiences and attitudes related to the use video games, generally, and the use of video games as an educational tool, specifically. This survey was modeled on one used in a study of pre-service teachers' perceptions of video games (Sardone & Devlin-Scherer, 2009). Students were given a similar survey at the end of the course to measure any changes in attitudes. Participants' self-reported levels of content knowledge (understanding of geography), pedagogical knowledge (principles of game-based learning), and technological knowledge (experience with video games for educational purposes) were compared

with their attitudes about using video games to teach. Notes taken during the project and the lessons the students wrote were also examined and analyzed to discover emergent themes.

Survey data revealed that participants agreed overall that video games offer an effective way to teach and learn in educational settings; however, there was virtually no change in the participants' attitudes about the use of video games to teach measured from pre to post. Nor were there any variables that appeared to predict their attitudes towards the use of video games. They were able to identify several benefits of using video games including: that they are fun and engaging, able to teach specific skills, and enable an inquiry-approach to teaching social studies, as well as obstacles to using video games, such as the games being a distraction, causing dizziness/motion-sickness, and a lack of access to the game by teachers and students.

Informal observations during the study revealed that the students were very engaged during the use of the game in class and they learned how to do things in the game well beyond the tasks laid out for them; however, two students were unable to play the game due to motion-

sickness. The students who did not experience motion-sickness clearly enjoyed working with the game. In addition, they designed lessons addressing the C3 Framework and identified principles of game-based learning addressed by their lessons, which suggested an appreciation and understanding of the intersection of pedagogical, content, and technological knowledge.

The results of this small-scale study help confirm both the potential uses and obstacles to using video games as a teaching tool in the social studies. Due to the small number of participants and the homogeneous nature of their experiences it is difficult to identify any specific factors that might predict whether or not a pre-service teacher is likely to embrace video games as an instructional tool for teaching social studies. In addition, the survey results are inconclusive regarding whether immersing the students in the game is an effective strategy for changing pre-service teachers' attitudes; however, the generally positive experiences reported by participants and the connections the participants made in the lessons to geography and game-based learning suggest that experiences like the one

used in this study are beneficial despite the incidents of motion-sickness experienced by two students.

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International Law on Special Education

Samantha Mrstik
University of Central Florida

Background

Franklin D. Roosevelt coined the term United Nations on January 1, 1942. Twenty-six nations pledged to continue to fight the Axis Powers of World War II (WWII). With the joint efforts of these original 26 nations, discussions began on what would later become the United Nations. The United Nations (UN) was officially formed in 1945 with 51 Member States ("History of the United Nations United Nations," n.d.). It was the responsibility of the UN to develop International Law to serve as a framework for governments to create policy ("Global issues at the United Nations," n.d.).

People with disabilities have suffered in silence throughout history. In 1948, in a direct response to the atrocities of World War II, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) wrote the *Declaration of Human Rights*. Article 1 of the *Declaration of Human Rights* (1948) stated, "All human beings are born free and equal in

dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood." The wording of Article 1 set the tone of the declaration and was written in response to the prosecution of Nazi War criminals in the Nuremberg Trials held from 1945-1949 ("Nuremberg Trials," 1945). Article 26 of the document declared, "everyone has a right to an education" and further proclaimed education as a human right (United Nations General Assembly, 1948). With this wording, the door was opened to change education for all students worldwide ("Global issues at the United Nations," n.d.).

The UN declared the year 1981 the International Year of Disabled Persons. The UN General Assembly adopted the *World Programme of Action concerning People with Disabilities* (WPA) in 1982. The WPA was used as a method to increase global disability prevention, rehabilitation, and equality. *World Programme of Action* adopted the World Health Organization's (WHO) definitions of impairment, disability, and handicap. The document also defined the terms prevention, rehabilitation, and equalization of opportunities for the international

community (*World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons*, 1982).

The *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (1989) assembled with the goal of ensuring the quality of life of all human beings. Article 5, Equality and Non-Discrimination, of this document, requested governments recognize people with disabilities as equal under the law, provide equal and effective legal protection against discrimination, and ensure reasonable accommodations. Article 6 demanded government protection for women with disabilities, and Article 7 insisted that governments protect the rights of children with disabilities (United Nations General Assembly, 1989).

By 1990, the *Education for All Act* was written by UNESCO, *United Nations Development Programme* (UNDP), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the World Bank, all divisions of the United Nations. This act was meant to reduce world illiteracy and expand primary education. The goals of *Education for All* were: (1) Expand early childhood care and education; (2) Provide free and compulsory primary education for all; (3) Promote learning and life skills for young people and

adults; (4) Increase adult literacy; (5) Achieve gender parity; and (6) Improve the quality of education (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 1990).

The *Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities* was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in December of 1993. The *Standard Rules* consisted of 22 rules concerning the health, education, and equality of people with disabilities and served as a guide for policymakers worldwide. Rule six of this document called for children and adults with disabilities to be afforded an education. Rule six was broken into nine subsections.

The Salamanca Statement

In an effort of continuing the commitment to the *Education for All* of 1990, a delegation representing 92 governments and 25 organizations met in Salamanca, Spain in June of 1994 with the goal of furthering inclusive education on a worldwide basis. The *Salamanca Statement: Framework for Action on Special Needs Education* was written to further expand the special education initiative of *Education for All* (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 1990).

The goal of the *Salamanca Statement* was to provide a framework for governments to base special education policy. The statement urged governments to adopt policies, which provided men and women with disabilities an inclusive education. An inclusive education was defined as all students being educated in an ordinary or typical classroom in an ordinary or typical school. This did not eliminate the need for the special school or special classroom but required the use of both, with special educators having to provide more intensive services for those students who required such services. Existing special education staff would be used for training general education teachers in typical school. Students who attended a special school should also attend a typical or ordinary school part time. Students who are deaf and blind were the exception to this rule; their education should take place in a setting using the proper means of communication. Depending on the student's needs, coordination of services may include special schools, ordinary or typical schools, non-government organizations (NGO), health, employment, and social services (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, 1994).

The changes described in the *Salamanca Statement* were not exclusive for students with disabilities but a part of *Education for All*. *Education for All* directed schools and governing bodies to adapt a child-centered approach to education. A child-centered approach was defined as a flexible and adaptive curriculum, which met the needs of all learners and also met the student's needs and interests. Students with special needs should receive additional instruction, but the content should be the same as their typical peers. In order to better motivate all students, content should be related to the students' interests and experiences. Teachers should monitor the progress of students by regularly using formative assessment. For students with disabilities, a continuum of services should be provided, which may include external resources and the use of appropriate and affordable technology to be used for mobility, communication, or learning (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 1994).

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Digital Book Clubs as Connected Learning in Social Education

Jason K. Ritter
Duquesne University

As the face of reading takes on a new complexion, there are a number of compelling reasons for social studies teachers to consider the potential use of digital technologies, especially e-readers, in their classrooms. One obvious reason is related to their pervasiveness, with an increasing number of digitally based texts being made available. Amazon reported in May 2011 that its sales of digital books surpassed that of its print books for the first time ever. Alongside this growing popularity, e-books and digital readers have the potential to unveil novel teaching and learning possibilities as traditional and new literacy skills are integrated in meaningful ways, seamlessly providing relevant and authentic learning experiences that engage young adolescents growing up in a digital age (Larson, 2010).

Those of us in social education interested in digital texts and concerned with student engagement may do well to take a cue from our peers in library and information sciences (LIS), who, like us, are charged

with providing educative experiences and services to adolescents in a fast-paced and increasingly digital world. An evolving discourse in that field centers on connected learning. Invoking principles of sociocultural learning theory, connected learning:

> advocates for broadened access to learning that is socially embedded, interest-driven, and oriented toward educational, economic, or political opportunity…. [and] is realized when a young person is able to pursue a personal interest or passion with the support of friends and caring adults, and is in turn able to link this learning and interest to academic achievement, career success or civic engagement. (Ito et al., 2013, p. 4)

Connected learning is based on evidence that "the most resilient, adaptive, and effective learning involves individual interest as well as social support to overcome adversity and provide recognition" (Ito et al., p. 4). This manuscript argues that digital book clubs are valuable tools for social education because of their ability to achieve connected learning through linking literacies, popular culture, and citizenship.

Linking Literacies, Popular Culture, and Citizenship

Literacy is much more than reading and writing. While all teachers must foster these abilities in their students, there are additional strands of

literacy that become increasingly complex at the middle and secondary levels. One of these strands is situated in the academic disciplines and stresses the importance of providing adolescents with access to the ways of "saying(writing)-doing-being-valuing-believing" of disciplinary insiders (Gee, 1996, p. 127). In the case of social education, this might mean encouraging students to read and question texts like historians by focusing on historical literacy. Important historical concepts include historical significance, evidence, continuity and change, cause and consequence, historical perspectives, and the ethical dimension (Seixas & Morton, 2012). Some associated historical literacy skills include sourcing, contextualization, corroboration, and making generalizations (Wineburg, Martin, & Monte-Sano, 2011). Teachers can learn more about these concepts and skills, and find a wealth of supplemental materials and resources, at the websites for The Historical Thinking Project (http://historicalthinking.ca) and The Stanford History Education Group (http://sheg.stanford.edu).

A related strand of literacy is situated in a broader recognition that literacy is a social act that requires active participation. The multiple

literacies that flow from this recognition enable individuals to learn about and understand the world in a variety of ways, and to communicate those understandings with others (Bloome & Enciso, 2006). Digital book clubs create spaces for social activity that engage youth through the use of popular cultural texts and technology, specifically young adult literature (YAL) made available on e-readers. Young adult literature offers a high level of engagement that influences comprehension and reading achievement as well as an excellent means for exploring content area concepts and skills. Digital book clubs can be a tool for connecting social issues, adolescents' interests, digital literacies, and content area academic goals. The structure of book clubs further offers a venue in which peers assist, support, and challenge each other. This is useful for their development as democratic citizens in a diverse and interdependent society because all students bring unique perspectives and multiple literacies to their joint participation in the group.

Digital Book Clubs in Action

Purposefully bringing together so many spheres of influence to advance student learning may require teachers to go against the grain.

Still, when asked to lead digital book clubs with students, many come to recognize their ability to generate authentic student interest, to support access to technology, and to help accomplish key tenets of connected learning. Teachers leading digital book clubs act as facilitators, making explicit the connections they see between students' responses and academic goals. This kind of teaching requires the authentic listening, quick thinking, and flexibility of a caring adult that is central to connected learning. Digital book clubs prove successful as models of connected learning for social education in other ways. One student noted how the digital book clubs "made reading fun because we were reading a text we enjoyed and the book club was run by adults we respected and loved to be around." This quotation suggests book clubs are successful in building on student interest in a supportive environment, and are successful in fueling curiosity. Importantly, however, the book clubs are more than just entertainment. With time, students begin to take leadership of their group meetings. One teacher commented how later meetings "were awesome" because he had to do "little to no work. The students took complete control of the club and group discussion throughout." This comment

shows how the digital book clubs, rooted as they are in popular culture and driven by student interests, eventually tend to produce peer-mediated, supportive environments for learning. As a final example, another teacher was amazed with how the students "shared different views and opinions on the book's story and characters which allowed for a great debate. When asked to support the claims with evidence from the book, I was again surprised with their abilities." This example highlights how the students were able to make connections and practice skills closely aligned with literacies of social education.

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The Outliers of the 2016 Presidential Election: Explaining the surge of Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders

Michael L. Rogers
State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota

If there are outliers in the race for the 2016 presidential election it is Republican Businessman Donald J. Trump and Democratic Socialist and Senator Bernie Sanders. This presidential election is anything but usual. Traditional candidates and establishment politicians are getting little attention while presidential preference polls place most of them at or near the bottom in polling. Interestingly, in this election cycle, political experience and sound policy puts a candidate at a disadvantage and the more extreme a policy stance the more supporters it attracts and media attention it gets. By exploring the presidential campaigns of Donald J. Trump and Bernie Sanders, much can be learned about this unusual election cycle.

The brash real estate mogul Donald J. Trump has broken all the rules in running a presidential campaign. He is politically incorrect, speaks before he thinks, boasts about his wealth, and insults others, all while

saying he will "Make American Great Again" if elected president. Not surprisingly, his daring approach to presidential politics has resulted in numerous gaffes. He caused uproar when he said: "When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best. They're sending people that have lots of problems. They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists" (Moodley, 2015). He refused to call Arizona Senator and Vietnam POW John McCain a legitimate war hero saying "He's a war hero 'cause he was captured. I like people that weren't captured" (Schreckinger, 2015). He insulted presidential candidate Carly Fiorina by saying "Look at that face, would anyone vote for that?" (Uchimiya, 2015). He reportedly mocked a disabled reporter over a disagreement about post-911 celebrations and also called for a temporary yet controversial ban on all Muslims entering the U.S. (DelReal, 2015). However, the most recited statement by Donald Trump is his insistence to build a wall along the US / Mexico border: "I will build a great wall — and nobody builds walls better than me, believe me, and I'll build them very inexpensively. I will build a great, great wall on our southern border, and I will make Mexico pay for that wall. Mark my words" (Moodley, 2015).

Trumps boldest policy ideas leave voters, politicians and pundits in the media wondering how they can be achieved. His policy to deport an estimated 10-plus million undocumented immigrants in the U.S. would be unprecedented, his call to temporarily ban all Muslims from entering the U.S. is questionable, and his announcement that he would build a wall along the US/Mexican border and have Mexico pay for it is inconceivable (Drew, 2015). Despite Trumps gaffes and brash statements, he soars in GOP presidential polls and continues to dominate the republican field of candidates (Cathcart, 2015).

To explain the surge of Donald Trump, one must examine those to whom he appeals. Mr. Trump is the alpha male of the republican presidential candidates. He has tapped into a nerve of the GOP. His campaign speeches display passion, emotion and anger, which appeals directly to those in the GOP who are fed up with establishment politicians who they believe say one thing and do another while beholden to special interest. His self-funded campaign is a draw for many of his supporters since they believe he cannot be bought or persuaded contrary to his campaign promises (Vavreck, 2016). They believe his business

background as a deal maker makes him the ideal candidate to break the deadlock that persists in the U.S. Congress. His assertion that the U.S. has the "dumbest politicians" only deepens his supporter's beliefs. His political incorrectness is embraced by his followers since he bluntly says what his supporters are thinking but are afraid to say. His fame and mastery of social media only adds to his ambience and has allowed his towering insults to have little effect on his presidential campaign. Many of Trump's supporters feel as if they actually know the "real" Donald Trump from his reality show or because they follow his twitter feed, and the "real" Donald Trump is often smeared and taken out of context by his opponents or the liberal media. The loyalty of Trump's supporters was confirmed when he said he could "…stand in the middle of Fifth Avenue and shoot somebody…" and he wouldn't lose any voters. (Diamond, 2016).

Donald Trump's appeal is unique. His near universal celebrity status and bold statements have allowed him to capture the GOP spotlight and he continues to dominant the republican field because he comes across as an assertive leader who is brash, politically incorrect, and beholden to

no one, not the political establishment or special interest (Vavreck, 2016). In a typical presidential election campaign, these characteristics or any one gaffe can be detrimental to any candidate. However, if your name is Donald J. Trump, they only make your poll numbers greater, at least in this election.

Vermont Senator and self-proclaimed democratic socialist Bernie Sanders would be limited in his appeal or even a third party candidate if this were a typical presidential election. Technically he is not even a member of the Democratic Party (Merica, Feb 2015). He is a registered independent and his policies fall to the left of most democrats placing him outside the mainstream democratic ideology. However, this is not a typical election year. Sanders continues to gain momentum in his campaign and against all odds, he has turned into a formidable opponent to democratic candidate and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. Secretary Clinton was supposed to win the Democratic nomination with ease. After all, she has been endorsed by nearly every main-stream Democratic politician and governor. However, she is vulnerable. Her use of personal email as Secretary of State is under investigation by the FBI for allegedly sharing

classified information. This email issue has continued to plague her campaign as polls show a majority of Americans now believe she is "untrustworthy" (Merica, June 2015). The Sander's campaign has been the beneficiary of this claim. Once a long shot, now many democrats are taking a second look at the Sanders campaign and many are even "Burning for Bernie!" Though it would be unprecedented if Mr. Sanders got the nomination, his appeal and ability to draw big crowds must be examined.

As evident at his rallies and across college campuses nationwide, Bernie Sanders is popular among young voters and progressives. Recent polling suggests that Sanders beat Hillary Clinton 84 to 14 percent points among Democrats aged 17 to 29 and also won voters aged 30 to 44 by a 21 percentage points (Blake, 2016). Polling also suggests that many Democrats now consider themselves progressives or socialists rather than liberals (Silver, 2016). Sanders appeals to this particular demographic of young voters and progressives because they are captivated by the notion of an expansive government to break up the big banks, regulate Wall Street, tax the rich, raise minimum wage and provide free services such as healthcare, childcare and college tuition to all. Additionally, his

supporters are not daunted by the word "socialism." Older generations hear the word "socialism" and do not think of someone to the far-left, but rather as someone holding policies that are Un-American, as in the context of the Cold War. Young people, born after the fall of the Berlin Wall, and progressives view socialism as in the context of European politics and relate it to a welfare state with high taxes and numerous social programs in which they would like to see established in the U.S. Sander's supporters believe Hillary Clinton is wounded from federal investigations, out of touch and untrustworthy. They see Bernie as the most appealing and authentic candidate since he speaks directly to young people and progressives about issues that they feel are the most important, mainly free healthcare and college education.

Ironically, the campaigns of Trump and Sanders have much in common. Both want to start a political revolution and derail the establishment in their respective parties. Both candidates project a passionate yet simplistic message and divulge little detail regarding their proposed policies. They are also perceived as the most authentic candidates in their particular parties and like the candidates or not, few

doubt their genuine belief in the messages they repeat on the campaign trail. They both are also running a populist campaign which plays to the hopes or fears of their constituencies. They also are a big draw to younger voters since millennials tend to be less party driven and more issues driven. Both candidates are independent of special interest groups and advocate a stronger or bigger government to solve controversial issues. The candidates also appeal to angry voters for economic reasons, especially since the U.S. economy has been slow to recover from its most recent recession (AP, 2014). Both candidates appeal to and benefit from low information voters and last minute voters, who hear simple messages repeated such as "Make America Great Again" or "Free College and Healthcare" and flock to the band wagon, without asking how or if it is possible. From "Read my Lips, No New Taxes" to "Hope and Change," a catchy and simplistic slogan can make all the difference when it comes to winning a nomination.

After examining the outliers of the 2016 presidential election it is clear that Donald Trump is surging because he is perceived as a strong leader. He is running a populist campaign that plays on the emotions and

fears of voters on controversial issues such as immigration or terrorism. His magic is toughness with an assertive populist appeal that will, in his words, Make America Great Again. It also helps Trump that the Republican leadership is unable to rally around one of the many establishment GOP candidates. On the other hand, Bernie Sanders is surging because he is perceived as the idealistic dreamer of the Democratic Party appealing to the long-held hopes and visions of liberals. His magic is socialism, where the government is going to right all the wrongs and redistribute wealth to provide free programs for all, paid for by the wealthy. Likewise, it helps Sanders that the Clinton campaign is struggling to find its core message and is under investigation for its handling of classified emails. It is important to note that much of the political jargon that Trump and Sanders are proposing is simply unrealistic and their campaign promises, if elected, would likely be stonewalled in the halls of the U.S. Congress, regardless of which party is in control. Whether it is the promise of free healthcare or an assurance to deport millions of undocumented immigrants, to their loyal supporters, the policy

details do not really matter. Like a bad gift, it's the thought that really counts.

Details often get lost in the excitement or rhetoric of campaign season but one thing is sure, voter interest has been tapped and it is encouraging to see an increase in civic engagement with record turn outs for rallies and viewership ratings for debates. It is also important to point out that both campaigns are good for America since they appeal to many people that normally stand idle during elections and many of those people are now getting involved in the political process as evident with record voter turnouts in the 2016 primaries and caucuses. Hopefully this magic will carry over into the general election, regardless of the party nominees.

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Is Zivotofsky v. Kerry the Marbury v. Madison of our Day?

Terri Susan Fine
University of Central Florida

On October 17, 2002, Menachem Binyamin Zivotofsky was born in Jerusalem to U.S. citizen parents. Under U.S. citizenship law, Zivotofsky is a U.S. citizen by birth—he will be eligible to run for president once he turns 35—even though he was born out of the country. The following December, Menachem's mother Naomi, went to the U.S. embassy in Tel Aviv requesting a passport for Menachem and asked that his place of birth be listed as "Jerusalem, Israel". Naomi's request was denied. The issue at hand was not whether Menachem's birthplace was in dispute—he was born in Jerusalem. It was the second geographic place that triggered the dispute. Is Jerusalem part of Israel, part of Palestine, or is Jerusalem neutral ground?

Zivotofsky v. Kerry 576 U.S. ___ (2015) examined whether Congress had the authority to pass the Foreign Relations Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2003 (FRAA) Section 214 instructing U.S. officials to list "Israel" as the place of birth on passports for those American citizens

born in Jerusalem who request it. Since Israel's 1948 independence, federal law required that U.S. citizens born in Jerusalem could have only "Jerusalem" listed on their passport, and not "Jerusalem, Israel" in order to avoid the U.S. taking sides in the ongoing Arab-Israeli conflict over the status of Jerusalem. John Kerry was named as the respondent in this case because he was serving as Secretary of State when the case was decided by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Both Israel and the Palestinian national movement claim Jerusalem as their capital. The city was divided in 1949 following Israel's war for independence. Israel has controlled western Jerusalem since then, and it occupied East Jerusalem during the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. Israel later annexed East Jerusalem although neither the United States nor the United Nations recognized the move. The U.S. government's position has long been that Jerusalem's status must be resolved as part of Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations, now dormant.

U.S. State Department policy reflects U.S. neutrality on Jerusalem. Can the State Department regulate how places of birth are listed on passports even though Congress passed a law signed by President George

W. Bush saying otherwise? The question put before the Supreme Court was, in many respects, over 200 years old because it focuses on core elements central to the design of the U.S. Constitution, specifically separation of powers, checks and balances, and legislative supremacy—the notion that the lawmaking branch is supreme over the executive branch, which is what the framers intended. While the Supreme Court was asked to rule on these larger questions, the issue that brought these questions to the Court is caught up in U.S.-Israel relations. Does Congress supersede or otherwise limit the State Department's purview to decide how places of birth are listed on passports? In this instance, those passports belong to U.S. citizens born in Jerusalem and not elsewhere.

It is critical, though, to step back and recognize that the U.S. Constitution does not give the Supreme Court judicial review. Considered the greatest among Supreme Court powers, the Court extended to itself judicial review in Marbury v. Madison (1803) which dealt, in some ways, with many of the same issues central to Zivotofsky v. Kerry: What are legislative and executive powers, and from where are those powers derived?

Article II of the U.S. Constitution gives foreign relations powers to the president including negotiating treaties and receiving public ambassadors. Considering both these powers suggests that the president has the sole power to recognize sovereign nations. For the State Department to act as an extension of the president, and not Congress, as the unified foreign policy voice for the nation, would indicate that Congress should not have muted the president's voice, through the State Department, by passing the FRAA. President Bush formally opposed the passport provision in a signing statement although he signed the legislation because he supported other parts of the FRAA. The Constitution does not give the president the line item veto which would enable the president to sign parts of laws but cross out other parts that he wants to veto.

Considered differently, Congress acted within its legislative authority. The framers created the presidency in part to foster a unified foreign policy voice on behalf of the United States while also designating Congress as the most powerful branch of government. Congress had the

power to enact the FRAA, a provision of which suggests that Jerusalem is part of Israel.

In a 6-3 decision, the Court sided with the State Department and, by extension, with President Obama, whose position on Jerusalem's geopolitical place agrees with his predecessor, President Bush. In siding with the State Department, the Court held consistent with prior cases that the executive branch enjoys sole power to conduct foreign affairs.

The classroom applications for this case are extensive. These applications include helping students understand how judicial review occurs in a checks and balances and separation of powers system, as well as the long term impact of Marbury v. Madison. The case also helps students better understand the tension between the legislative and the executive branch regarding the lawmaking process (Did the legislative branch have the power to include Section 214 in the FRAA?). The Court also examined constitutional presidential powers including Article II, Section 3 ("he shall receive Ambassadors"), the exercise of presidential powers (signing statements), and powers that the U.S. Supreme Court has

deemed not to belong to the president (line-item vetoes),[1] all of which give students a real-world application of these powers in a way that pertains to a contemporary foreign policy issue (U.S.-Israel relations; the Arab-Israeli conflict). Finally, the case articulates the rights of U.S. citizenship which include holding a U.S. passport and provides an unusual example of natural born citizenship.

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[1] The U.S. Supreme Court determined that the president did not have the power of the line-item veto in Clinton v. City of New York 524 U.S. 417 (1998).

Social Studies Teachers' Perception of the Purpose of Civic Education

İskender İkinci
Dumlupınar University

Emin Kılınç
Dumlupınar University

Bülent Tarman
Gazi University

Civic education is one of the most popular concepts in the 21st century. It is crucial for every nation across the World. One of the intended goals of formal education is educating good citizens (Chapin, 2011, Kılınç & Dere, 2013). Today, there is general consensus in developed countries that students should be educated to understand and participate majority rule, respect human rights, care for the common good, and protect one another's freedoms (Parker, 2012). The purpose of social studies is to prepare active and responsible citizens with civic knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Hilburn & Moguth, 2015; Kılınç & Dere, 2013; Kılınç, 2015). Thus, social studies teachers have pivotal role in the development of civic abilities of young people. In this perspective, social studies teachers can help foster the knowledge, skills and dispositions that

young people need to develop into politically aware and socially responsible individuals (Kahne & Sporte, 2008; Torney-Purta & Vermeer, 2004).

Several researches showed that teachers' background knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs have huge impact on their teaching (Alley-Johnson, 1993). A few empirical studies focus directly on the perception of social studies teachers about the aim of the civic education in Turkey. Thus, this study investigates social studies teachers' view of the aim of civic education. Research question of the study is to what extend are social studies teachers' attitude levels about civic education? The authors apply quantitative survey method in this study. The data will be collected by a "Purpose of civic education scale" which was developed by the authors. Simple random sampling will be used to select participants in the west part of Turkey. According to the results, social studies teachers believed that civic education should be given as a separate subject. They also asserted that social studies curricula should have more civic topics. Teachers believed that preparing for career is not a part of social studies education.

Lastly, according to the participants gaining global competence is not a goal of civic education.

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Are Turkish Pre-Service Social Studies Teachers Ready to Teach Global Citizenship?

Emin Kılınç
Dumlupınar University

We are living in a world which is getting smaller and more interconnected. Over the past decades, the interconnectedness and interdependence of human societies across the world have increased. The lives of citizen living in Turkey as well as other countries are tied in direct and powerful ways to the lives of citizens living in the other parts of the world (Kılınç & Korkmaz, 2015). It has an impact on the perception of citizenship all over the world and challenges nation-states. Thus the term of global citizenship is on the table again (Carter, 2001). In the area of education, many educators have supported the idea global citizenship and recommended equipping students with knowledge, skills and values which help them to see beyond borders and divisions in order to view the world holistically (Merryfield, 2007; Merryfield & Kasai, 2010; Rapoport, 2009; Schattle, 2008; Veugelers, 2011).

The purpose of this paper is to investigate preservice social studies teachers' views on global citizenship. The author tried to examine preservice teachers' attitudes toward global citizenship because teachers are key players in preparing children for the world/global world. The author applied quantitative survey model for this study. Survey research involved the collection of information from a sample of individuals through their responses to questions. It is an efficient method for systematically collecting data from a broad spectrum of individuals and educational settings (Fraenken & Wallen, 2003). Survey research concerns with assessing attitudes, opinions, preferences, demographics, practices, and procedures (Gay, Mills, & Airisian, 2009). The sample of the study is consisted of 320 preservice social studies teachers. The data was collected by using "Global Citizenship Scale" which was developed by Morais and Ogden (2011). The scale has three dimensions: social responsibility, global competence, and global civic engagement.

The results showed that there was a significant difference between male and female pre-service social studies teachers on global competence dimension. Male pre-service social studies teachers have more positive

attitudes to global competence dimension than female participants. Also, male pre-service social studies teachers have more global knowledge than female pre-service social studies teachers. By considering non-governmental organization membership, there was a significant difference between member and non-member of NGO; members of NGO have more positive attitudes on global civic engagement than non-member of NGO.

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Towards Technology Integration into Social Studies Courses in Turkey: Technology Supported Social Studies Education Program and Teachers' Attitudes

Emin Kılınç
Dumlupınar University

Erhan Delen
Giresun University

Seray Kılınç
Dumlupınar University

Enis H. Baser
Dumlupınar University

Hafize Er Türküresin
Dumlupınar University

Mehmet M. Kaya
Dumlupınar University

Alper Kesten
Ondokuz Mayıs University

21st century has been named as information age through expeditious changes in the information technology. These changes provided new opportunities to reach information; therefore, the speed of accessing information has been accelerated in comparison to the past. These developments have created a huge impact in the field of education

and changed expectation from teachers especially in the processing of lessons, developing teaching materials, and using educational technology. Several studies have been conducted in the World about using educational technology (Gray, Thomas & Lewis, 2010; Liu, 2013; O'Dwyer, Russell, Bebell, & Seeley, 2008; Pan & Franklin, 2011). Similarly, several studies about technology supported education such as teachers', students, and other stakeholders' attitudes toward educational technology have been conducted in Turkey (Kabakçı Yurdakul, 2011; Öztürk, 2013; Usta & Korkmaz, 2010). However, there have been no studies about how to use computers, the internet and tablets in the social studies lessons and developing digital instructional materials for the social studies in the literature in Turkey. The main purpose of this study is to investigate social studies teachers' attitudes toward technology integration into their courses and provide a guide to develop digital teaching materials by training them on how to use technology on the process of teaching and learning.

The researchers used quantitative survey method in this research. The data was collected by technology attitudes survey which was developed by the researchers. The first section of the survey requested

demographic information from social studies teachers. The second section of the survey included teachers' attitudes. The authors used cluster sampling method to identify sample of the study.

This study also provides a brief information about a project "The Effects of Technology Supported Social Studies Education Program (TSSSEP) on the level of Social Studies Teachers' Digital İnstructional Materials Development and Educational Technology Using Skills" which aims to guide social studies teachers to develop digital teaching materials by training them on how to use technology on the process of teaching and learning.

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Taiwan, China: Exploring Teachers' Decision-Making Toward Teaching Controversial Issues Between Taiwan and The PRC

Yu-Han Hung
Michigan State University

Introduction

Given the paucity of research and contemporary debates concerning the relationship between China and Taiwan, this proposal examines the social and political controversy surveying the specific context of Taiwan. In Taiwan, I, as a Taiwanese educator, define the relationship between the People Republic of China and Taiwan as a political issue. More specifically, the cross-strait relations, the political meetings with the PRC government, and the trade agreement with the PRC are the main political issues raised as controversy in Taiwan (Lin, 2005; Chen, 2008; Grossman and Lo, 2008).

These controversial issues have substantively impacted history education, in particular the history curriculum and the explicit teaching of history (Lee, 1992; & Grawford, 1995). With the mixtures of beliefs and intentions enmeshed within political conflicts, social structures, and demographic changes, building a history curriculum in Taiwan is

inevitably, a contentious task. It will always be a challenging, but imperative, task for history educators to construct a history curriculum with a pluralist and broader view of the past and present, and to make the educational substance outweigh the Ideological/political dimensions of school history (Chen, 2008). Therefore, this paper, drawing data from a qualitative case study (Yin, 1983), focuses on the challenges faced by Taiwanese teachers' teaching controversial issues in their own social contexts: ambiguous sovereignty, demographic changes, and unclear national identity. Reflecting on how controversial issues are taken up as political issues concerning the relationship between China and Taiwan, I contend political ideologies, history curriculum reforms, and teachers' decisions have impacted the history curriculum and history teaching. Teachers' teaching is, indeed, the decisions made by teachers' rationale, knowledge, but more importantly, by their historical consciousness.

Research Questions

Given the tensions concerning teaching history in Taiwan, and conceiving teaching history as teaching controversy (and the political and

ideological ruptures therein), the following research questions guided my study:

- How do high school teachers in Taiwan think about their role in the classroom, and what are their reflections on the teaching of controversial social issues?

- How do high school teachers in Taiwan teach controversial social issues; in particular, how do they change and adjust their teaching when such issues are raised in the curriculum or by students?

Theoretical Framework

Employing a critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1992) lens on history curriculum reforms and relations of classroom instruction, this analysis works to unearth how teachers stance and rationale of teaching these issues (Hess, 2009). This paper works to build on the extant literature that examines the specific historical, social, and cultural contexts that made the conflicts between the PRC and Taiwan as controversial issues in curriculum. Moreover, it invests the teacher as curriculum gatekeeper under these dynamic movements (Thornton, 1991) making the decisions, developing the knowledge and reflecting the instruction.

Methods and Methodology

Given that this study is about "teachers" and "context," my research design and interpretivist method was used to describe and explore the knowledge and thought (as made salient through Taiwanese history teacher's implicit and explicit method/s) for teaching controversial content. Employing a case study design (Geertz, 1973; Yin, 1983) saturated with ethnographic methods (semi-structured interviews, participant observation, field notes) I paid particular attention to how teachers narrated their own understanding of history. These narratives acted as the primary object of analysis for this study. Throughout the course of inquiry, I worked with four participants, who taught in two different senior high schools in Taichung, Taiwan. Participant's backgrounds and preparation in teaching are varied, as some come from traditional teacher education programs while others are alternatively certified. Participants were interviewed five times. Interviews ranged from 40 minutes to 60 minutes. Additionally, I joined their class as participant observer for two months.

Findings

"Controversial issues" have their own definitions in Taiwan, and as illuminated by participants, it has impacted history education and challenged teachers' teaching and students' learning. Findings in this study highlighted two areas of particular concern: (1) *the impact of history curriculum* and *(2) teachers as a curriculum gatekeeper' decision and the reaction*.

The Impact of History Curriculum: Taiwan sovereignty and demographic changes have seriously impacted the history curriculum. This has resulted in frequent history curriculum reforms having negative impacts on teaching and learning history. Furthermore, the debate about the relationship between the PRC and Taiwan has changed the mission of the history curriculum from moral education to specifically political ideology-based education. For example, as one respondent, Mr. Wu contends, "*For me, a lot of controversial issues are not "historically controversial" issues, are not controversial because of a lack of evidence or missing materials. Instead, these issues are controversial because political parties, the History Curriculum Committee and media intentionally made the issues political and controversial.*"(Participant

Interview, 2013/06/15) The historical relationship between the PRC and Taiwan has been politicalized in the history curriculum. In sum, controversial issues *have* influenced the history curriculum (both in positive or negative ways).

Teacher As A Curriculum Gatekeeper's Decision and Reaction: A secondary finding shows how teachers as curriculum gatekeepers make the decision to react to controversial issues and its effects. Most teachers still see the value of teaching issues, but participants understand the history curriculum based on their knowledge and historical background. In sum, the implicit curriculum of personal experience informs the explicit teaching of history, detailing an imagined national history. Participating teachers challenged the explicit History curriculum, officially formulated by the curriculum committee, insofar as they saw themselves pushing to explore their knowledge by teaching the relationship between PRC and Taiwan. As Mr. Chen contends, "…*we are making more decisions about their teaching, including the chosen content, the representation of knowledge, and the way of seeing ourselves, that give hope for the future*."

Indeed, participant teachers feel they empower students and empower themselves by making decisions and teaching controversial issues.

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Marginalized Populations and AP Enrollment and Passage Rates in Florida 2011-2012

Bonnie Bittman
University of Central Florida

Alex Davies
University of Central Florida

Ekaterina Goussakova
University of Central Florida

Previously, the analysis of the College Board's Advanced Placement (AP) enrollment focused on marginalized populations' (i.e., African-American, Hispanic, and poor students) limited access and the schools' efforts to bridge the gaps. Little research has been done on marginalized populations' AP passage rates. The researchers of this correlational study investigated AP enrollment and passage rates in public and charter high schools in Florida ($n = 355$), comparing enrollment and passage proportions of Caucasian, African American, and Hispanic students, as well as proportions of students with free or reduced lunch. The results showed a weak, positive relationship between proportions of Hispanic, African-American, and Caucasian students passing AP exams

with the proportion of AP students enrolled. There was a strong, positive relationship between proportions of African-American, Hispanic, and Caucasian students passing. A weak, negative relationship was found between proportions of students enrolled in AP classes with proportions of poverty, as well as between the proportion of Hispanic, African-American, and Caucasian students passing with the percentage of the school's population on free or reduced lunch. The findings suggest that schools with high poverty rates have a decreased rate in students AP enrollment. The focus on AP enrollment rates for minorities led to increased rates of minorities successfully completing advanced coursework, but there is still a need for similar focus on high poverty schools.